

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, TU, US

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENTS ON
GOVERNMENT CRISIS, SECRETARY'S VISIT

SUMMARY:

IN A LENGTHY TELEVISED PRESS CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 7, PRIME
MINISTER ECEVIT EXPLAINED WHY ATTEMPT AT FORMING ECEVIT-LED
GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN ABANDONED AND WHY SECRETARY KISSINGER'S
VISIT TO TURKEY HAD TO BE POSTPONED. HE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT
AFTER "REASONABLE TIME", HE WOULD QUIT AS ACTING PRIME
MINISTER. HE STRONGLY ATTACKED OPPOSITION PARTIES AND BITTERLY
COMPLAINED OF OBSTRUCTIONISM OF HIS COALITION PARTNER, NATIONAL
SALVATION PARTY. END SUMMARY

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1. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT AT

NOVEMBER 7 PRESS CONFERENCE:

A. ATTEMPTS TO FORM GOVERNMENT - ECEVIT SAID HE HAD BEEN OPTIMISTIC THAT AS LAST RESORT, HE COULD FORM MINORITY GOVERNMENT, SINCE "THE OTHER PARTIES WOULD NOT FORM A GOVERNMENT WITH US, COULD NOT FORM A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT US, AND HAD NOT ALLOWED US TO FORM A GOVERNMENT." HE REVIEWED IN DETAIL HIS PROPOSALS TO OTHER PARTIES AND THEIR NEGATIVE RESPONSES. NOW, HE SAID, HE WAS BEING ACCUSED BY JUSTICE PARTY (JP) LEADER DEMIREL OF ATTEMPTING TO "OCCUPY" GOVERNMENT WITH MINORITY FORMULA. CONSEQUENTLY, "THERE IS NOTHING MORE OF REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) CAN DO," AND "THOSE WHO HAVE NOT GIVEN US THE PREREQUISITE ... FOR ASSUMING OUR RESPONSIBILITY ARE NOW OBLIGED TO ACT WITH RESPONSIBILITY."

B. DECISION TO RESIGN AS CARETAKER PREMIER - ECEVIT ASSERTED THAT THERE WAS PLAN TO MAKE GOVERNMENT CRISIS CONTINUE AS LONG AS POSSIBLE AND TO KEEP HIS PARTY "A PRISONER" IN AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WHICH "COULD NOT CARRY OUT A FOREIGN POLICY BENEFICIAL TO THE COUNTRY, COULD NOT CONTROL THE MARKET, COULD NOT CHECK INFLATION, AND COULD NOT PREVENT A HIGH COST OF LIVING, WHILE PUBLIC ORDER AND PEACE WOULD BE DISTURBED." UNDER THIS PLAN, OTHER PARTIES WOULD AGREE TO HOLDING EARLY ELECTIONS OR FORMING ANOTHER GOVERNMENT ONLY AFTER HIS PARTY HAD LOST SUPPORT BY GOVERNING UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS. BUT "THE TURKISH PEOPLE WOULD SUFFER MORE THAN THE RPP." THEREFORE, "WE WILL WAIT FOR A REASONABLE PERIOD WHICH WILL NOT BE LONG ... DURING THIS SHORT BUT REASONABLE PERIOD EITHER A GOVERNMENT IS FORMED OR RENEWAL OF ELECTIONS IS ACCEPTED. IN ANY CASE, WE WILL QUIT OUR DUTIES WHEN THE PERIOD WE HAVE SET FOR OURSELVES HAS EXPIRED. I WILL QUIT AS PRIME MINISTER. I HAVE NOT YET HAD A CHANCE TO TALK WITH ALL MY MINISTER FRIENDS. BUT I THINK THAT THEY WILL ALSO GIVE UP THEIR POSTS." QUESTION OF WHO WOULD REPLACE THEM MUST BE ANSWERED BY OPPOSITION PARTIES, WHO IF THEY DID NOT HAVE ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION IN MIND SHOULD NOT HAVE REJECTED ALL HIS PROPOSALS. "THERE IS NO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE OR LEGAL RULE" TO STOP HIS CARETAKER GOVERNMENT FROM QUITTING; FURTHERMORE, IT WOULD BE NO SERVICE TO COUNTRY TO CONTINUE GOVERNING UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS.

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C. FOREIGN RELATIONS - HIS COALITION PARTNER, NSP, HAD PREVENTED HIM FROM MAKING USEFUL VISITS TO SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES, GERMANY AND BELGIUM, AND FROM ADDRESSING NATO PARLIAMENTARIANS IN LONDON THIS MONTH, HE CHARGED. THEN TURNING TO QUESTION OF SECRETARY'S VISIT HERE, HE NOTED FIRST THAT "SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS BEEN WORKING HARD FOR MONTHS, DISPLAYING A CONSTRUCTIVE AND OBJECTIVE ATTITUDE, IN ORDER THAT A SOLUTION BE FOUND TO THE QUESTION OF CYPRUS

WITHOUT FURTHER HARM TO TURKISH-GREEK RELATIONS. WITH THIS AS HIS PURPOSE HE HAS RISKED CRITICISMS AND ATTACKS IN HIS OWN COUNTRY." HE HAD ASKED SECRETARY TO POSTPONE HIS VISIT ONCE BECAUSE OF GOVERNMENT CRISIS, AND ANOTHER POSTPONEMENT WOULD HAVE BEEN BOTH IMPROPER AND HARMFUL TO TURKEY'S CYPRUS POLICY. "BUT THE PARTNER IN THE COALITION HAS PRACTICALLY AND LEGALLY PREVENTED KISSINGER'S VISIT TO TURKEY" BY DEPRIVING GOVERNMENT OF "AUTHORITY TO REACH CONCRETE RESULTS" ON CYPRUS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH SECRETARY. EARLIER, ALL MEMBERS OF TURKISH NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, INCLUDING NSP LEADER ERBAKAN, HAD AGREED ON "SOME GOOD WILL GESTURES" TO FACILITATE CYPRUS SOLUTION. JUST BEFORE SECRETARY'S PLANNED ARRIVAL, HOWEVER, NSP "REJECTED THEM ALL" AND OPPOSED VISIT. AS RESULT,"I AM NOW IN A POSITION WHERE I COULD NO LONGER DISCUSS WITH HIM (THE SECRETARY) ANY OF THE QUESTIONS WHICH WE HAD EARLIER DECIDED AS A GOVERNMENT NOR COULD I ENTER INTO ANY ENGAGEMENT IN ANY OF THESE AREAS ... THIS POSSIBILITY, IN TERMS OF LEGALITY, HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM ME." IT WAS TO SAVE TURKEY' CYPRUS POLICY FROM SUCH DEADLOCK THAT HE HAD PROPOSED MINORITY GOVERNMENT WHICH JUST REJECTED BY OTHER PARTIES.

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